



SENATOR BEVERLY POWELL
DISTRICT 10

October 17, 2019

The Honorable John Whitmire
Chairman, Senate Committee on Criminal Justice
1E. 13, Texas Capitol
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairman Whitmire,

The Fort Worth community was shaken this weekend by the killing of Atatiana Jefferson in her home by Officer Aaron Dean during what was supposed to be a non-emergency wellness check. In light of this killing, I would like to request that the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice consider the inclusion of an interim charge focused on policing and community safety. It is my hope that this charge will build on the work done by the committee during previous interim sessions.

The Committee should identify opportunities to increase safety, accountability and transparency in our communities, for both our peace officers and the people they serve, and reduce the use of deadly force wherever possible. Through consultation with law enforcement and community stakeholders, this charge would include, but not be limited to, examining avenues and making recommendations to improve standards and training, data collection, community policing, and opportunities for increased diversity.

This weekend's events were devastating, but unfortunately, not unique. In the Fort Worth community alone, there have been five other fatal police shootings since June, and across the state, according to news sources, there have been more than 70 since the year began. I believe that this charge is timely and important for the people of Senate District 10 and for the state of Texas as a whole.

Page 2
Chairman Whitmire

While I am not a member of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice, I thank you for your consideration of this charge, and for all of your leadership on these very difficult issues. I look forward to working with you during the interim and throughout the next legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beverly Powell". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Beverly Powell
Senator, District 10

cc: Lieutenant Governor Patrick